

*** Attention Education Journalists: For immediate release 18/02/2008 ***

Discussion paper opens way to address impact of VSU

The Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA) has welcomed the release of the Federal Government's discussion paper on the impact of the former government's "VSU" legislation.

"The discussion paper opens the way for the new government to stand by its commitment to ensuring quality student services and representation on campus," 2008 CAPA President Nigel Palmer said.

CAPA's 2007 report, *The Impact of VSU on Postgraduate Students*, highlighted postgraduates as among the groups most disadvantaged by the impact of VSU.

"The impact of VSU on support for independent advocacy and representation was one of the main issues identified in the 2007 report. CAPA commends the focus on independent representation and advocacy in the discussion paper. Many organisations providing these services prior to the introduction of the VSU legislation now no longer exist, or struggle to continue with little or no funding at all. For postgraduates, these are critical issues that must be addressed."

CAPA has offered a standing invitation to Kate Ellis, the Federal Minister undertaking consultation with the aim of improving campus services, for a tour of any campus to speak with postgraduates about the impact of VSU.

"We welcome these first steps in addressing the devastation caused by VSU, and recognising the role and value of student organisations for all students. CAPA looks forward to working with the new government in returning quality student services and representation to Australian university campuses," CAPA President Nigel Palmer concluded.

Further information is available from the CAPA website at www.capa.edu.au/vsu2008.

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CAPA is the national peak body representing Australia's 264,000 postgraduate students.
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